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MRI Evidence Argues for a Dissociative Subtype of PTSD

A group of prominent PTSD researchers published an article presenting evidence confirming the existence of a subtype of PTSD characterized by symptoms of dissociation. A review article appeared in the June issue of *The American Journal of Psychiatry* [Ruth Lanius, et al, Emotion Modulation in PTSD: Clinical and Neurobiological Evidence for a Dissociative Subtype, 2010, 167(6), 640-647].

Overmodulation vs Undermodulation

Lanius, et al, defined dissociation: "Although there are many ways to conceptualize dissociation, a useful heuristic is that dissociation involves detachment from the overwhelming emotional content of the experience during and in the immediate aftermath of trauma" (p. 640). The authors add that dissociation involves the fragmentation and compartmentalization of memory and impairments in memory retrieval. This subtype of PTSD develops as a result of "chronic psychological, sexual, and physical trauma as well as emotional neglect." Lanius, et al, note that such conditions are characteristic of child abuse and combat. Such a trauma response results in a frequent "overmodulation of affect," as opposed to the "undermodualted type" characterized by reexperiencing and hyperarousal, which are usually the result of acute traumatic experiences.

MRI Evidence

Lanius, et al, present MRI evidence that finds "the neural correlates of reexperiencing states and dissociative states, respectively, in PTSD show *opposite* patterns of brain activation in brain regions that are implicated in arousal modulation and emotion regulation" (p. 641). Thus the reexperiencing/hyperarousal reactivity "can be viewed as a form of emotion dysregulation that involves emotional undermodulation..." (p. 641). Overmodulation results in hyperinhibition of the brain's limbic responses by activation of the prefrontal cortex during the conscious processing of threat. Lanius, et al, comment that research with Vietnam War veterans indicates that the dissociative subtype involving the overmodulation of affect is associated with long term psychological responses to combat trauma (p. 644).

The authors discuss the implications for research and treatment when the subtypes of PTSD are separated. "These findings have important implications for assessment and treatment of PTSD, including the need to assess patients with PTSD for dissociative symptoms into a stage-oriented trauma treatment model. They also suggest that grouping all PTSD patients for the purposes of research, regardless of their different symptom patterns, in the same diagnostic category may hamper our understanding of posttrauma psychopathology" (p. 645).

Lanius, et al, review earlier research into this subject and refer to theories by Horowitz, Lindemann, and Lenore Terr. "Indeed, this model resembles the signs and symptoms of response to a stressful life event that were originally described by Lindemann...and Horowitz...in their classic works on stress response syndromes. Horowitz expressed two predominant states. The first was an intrusive state characterized by intrusive feelings and compulsive action. The other was a state of denial marked by dissociative symptoms such as emotional numbing and constriction of ideation. The core problem in PTSD, from his point of view, is under- or over modulation of affective response to traumatic memories—the emotion modulation system cannot adequately regulate effect of extreme traumatic input" (p. 643). Child psychiatrist Lenore Terr's theory also identified two types of posttraumatic responses that parallel the undermodulation vs overmodulated subtypes.

The authors refer to Foa and Cloitre in arguing that treatment of PTSD should proceed differently for these-subtypes, with the overmodulated patients treated with a phase-based treatment plan which acknowledges the need to develop alternative coping skills, such as mood regulation and grounding, before launching the approved exposure-based treatments for PTSD that have the strongest empirical support. Lanius, et al, repeat that it is important that clinicians assess the level of dissociation in clients with PTSD prior to engaging a treatment plan. EE ##

Movie Review:

The Dry Land—OIF Veteran With Blocked Memory

Reviewed by Emmett Early

The Dry Land, a film about an OIF veteran's difficult first days home after deployment, was shown at the Seattle International Film Festival. It was written and directed by Ryan Piers Williams, with Ryan O'Nan as the army veteran, James, and America Ferrera as his wife, Sarah. Ferrera was also executive producer of *The Dry Land*. The description of the film in the Festival brochure, by critic Tom Keogh, yawned that the film had "generic echoes of every stress disordered vet movie in history." Hardly a promotion, and sad to say, for *The Dry Land* was made with great sincerity, with, according to the director, much processing with veterans and approval of the army, which cooperated with filming at Walter Reed Hospital.

The Dry Land is a grim film that shows the sad-eyed veteran, James, returning to his mobile home outside El Paso, Texas. The homecoming party is awkward, with his long-time friend, Michael (Jason Ritter), prying him with questions about killing. James does not remember a traumatic event when his Humvee was blown up by a rocket-propelled grenade. Three of the five crew survived, but one survivor was badly wounded.

James has a bad first night home in bed, clutching his wife in a strangling grip during a nightmare in a vividly real dark scene that conveyed the involuntary nature of PTSD arousal.

James visits his mother who is disabled with emphysema. His Vietnam War veteran father had died of an alcohol related disease. ("Your daddy was a real mess when he came back.") His mother is played by Melissa Rio with convincing charm and pathos. She blithely smokes with an oxygen tube in her nose, dismissing her son's scolding warning.

James gets a job at a cattle slaughtering yard and is shown on his first day of grizzly work as a cow is slaughtered, scenes which drove a few folks from their theater seats. *The Dry Land* had excellent casting. One gross co-worker at the slaughter house is as obscene as the work, taunting James: "The war fuck you up, or what?" When James's friends coax him into an after-work drunk, they end up in the desert fighting and James gets smacked, blind-sided, in the head with a rifle butt.

Sarah tries to get James to talk about his deployment, but he is flummoxed by the inadequacy of his memories. When he receives a letter from a veteran who was with him in the Humvee, James goes abruptly to visit him.

James's friend refuses to talk about the traumatic event, but rides with James to Walter Reed to visit their wounded comrade, also with sad eyes, a double amputee who is humiliated by a episode of incontinence during their visit, but who does relate the missing facts of the trauma. These relate to the "Hajiis" using a civilian family as bait, wounding a woman whom James insists that they stop and help, making their vehicle an easy target for the rocket.

James falls into a crisis when his mother dies in the hospital. In a scene that harkens to *Brothers*, James, drunk, having fought with Michael, drives off followed by police, and makes a suicide gesture with a pistol in his mouth, in a standoff before he surrenders to police.

Like *Brothers, The Dry Land* promotes itself as a movie about family relationships. The director insists that the movie is not political, yet the atmosphere of the film is all about death and as grim as *In The Valley of Elah*, which was overtly political. It is a wonder how any film about war veterans returning to their home society could not be political if it is intimate enough to show the effects of the war on the veteran.

The Dry Land portrays the three veterans of this film as vulnerable and not yet defended by methods of coping. James admits that he lied about symptoms on his post-deployment screening because he didn't want his discharge to be held up. James admits to the ER doctor at the army medical center where he gets his head wound from the drunken brawl attended that he's "been on edge." The doctor gives him an appointment for the psychiatrist for the next week, which seems not immediately helpful. The doctor also gives James a prescription, "something for anxiety," and we see James periodically for the rest of the picture quaffing pills from the amber plastic container, reminiscent of Travis Bickle in *Taxi Driver.*

Director Williams told the audience at the Festival screening that he made *The Dry Land* "for less than a million dollars." Despite the tight budget, the film was loaded with well-cast supporting roles, including one shepherd dog that commanded attention in every scene he was in.

How many films about agony and discomfort of war veterans can be made, before becoming "generic echoes of every stress disordered vet movie in history"? I would suggest that the "generic echoes" are in fact archetypal motifs played out in 21st Century dress. The conflict depicted in the films about veterans of the Wars on Terror are indeed quite similar to the Vietnam War era, and the post-WWII era. The spouse and friends of the veteran struggle to understand. Parents want the veteran to get on with life. Veterans bounce like those stainless steel pinballs from one clanging barrier to another, reacting with sometimes accelerated motion.

Yet for all the films and stories about veterans of other wars, back to Eric Maria Remarque's thoughtful *The Road Back,* director Williams acknowledged that he only just discovered PTSD as a problem for veterans. A big difference this time around is that the military is supporting a film that depicts with dramatic candor the perils of post-war adjustment. The shift is seen in the federal government's attitude toward the reality of the difficulty that veterans have when they return home, which is reflected in Charles Hoge's book, *Once a Warrior always a Warrior*, that argues for the broader perspective that post-war adjustment struggles are normal and expected, and that help is available. Yet James' memory block is not normal, but rather post-traumatic psychopathology that should warrant a diagnosis of PTSD. And if PTSD is normal in a society, it is surely an indication that the society is under great stress.

The Dry Land is scheduled for an August release in Seattle. ##

Boots to Books Higher Education Update

By Peter G. Schmidt, Psy. D.

Over the course of the past several months many great veteran initiatives have occurred across the state in higher education. The following highlight some of these activities. Many people are actively involved to create veteran friendly learning environments and it is the voice of the vet that is a major player in these efforts.

Veterans Summit

The Evergreen State College and their VETS Team hosted the first of its kind Regional Veterans Summit on May 6th and 7th where over 200 people were in attendance. Ed Tick, Ph.D. consultant, psychotherapist and author of *War and the Soul* shared his experiences of war's impact in the life of the veteran. Nancy Schiesari, Emmy-nominated producer/director, led a discussion and answered questions about the film, *Tattooed Under Fire*. The video is a portrait of young men and women who describe their thoughts prior to and after deployment, and tattoos are the metaphor of their journey. Participants were able to hear about the military and higher education experiences of male and female student veterans. The voices of these individuals were most powerful and everyone in the room heard about the impact of war, living with these experiences and memories, invisible wounds, and the continued daily cost that occurs in the lives of these mature young men and women. Another panel described best practices and initiatives at Evergreen, Green River, Central Washington University and other colleges and universities. The conference afforded the opportunity to network with colleagues and it was heartening to witness the interest of many professionals from across the region.

Evergreen hit a home run as the venue and underlying theme for the conference touched on the complexity and burdens of war in the life of student veterans, family members, and dependents. As was described in a recent correspondence, "The conference was a powerful expression of the Northwest's commitment to veterans and it demonstrated the region's leadership in proactively addressing these complex issues."

Partners for Veteran Supportive Campuses

On April 15th in separate ceremonies (Spokane and Cheney), Spokane Community College, Spokane Falls, and Eastern Washington University, along with John Lee, WDVA Director, signed the Partners for Veteran Supportive Campuses Memorandum of Understanding (MOU). Presidents of each campus were present to offer their insights around the importance of the MOU. The words of Joe Dunlap, Ed. D., President of Spokane Community College and retired Army pilot still resonate as he offered how the military taught him about sacrifice and the importance of serving others before oneself. It was also a great day for Eastern as they debuted and recognized members of their Military Services Advisory Committee by presenting each a "Challenge Coin."

Dr. Peter Schmidt, is in charge of the student counseling program at Everett Community College and serves as a contractor with the Washington State Department of Veterans Affairs in support of the program's outreach to aid veterans partaking in higher education.

Civilian Warrior Training

Shoreline, Spokane Falls, Spokane Community and South Seattle Community Colleges, along with the Pima Medical Institute, hosted a training to better understand how military stressors, training, war experience, readjustment, and invisible wounds affect the life of the returning veteran and the best practices and strategies that can be implemented to ease the adjustment from military to higher education culture. Dave Slagle, Ph. D., Psychologist, VAMC and I co-presented a similar workshop at the Washington Community and Technical College Counselors Spring Conference at Rainbow Lodge. Steve and Lisa Tice spoke from the heart about the veteran and family experience with the wounds of war following our presentation, which made for a great discussion for all. The Washington Academic Advising Coalition also requested a short training at their conference as well.

Each of these institutions and organizations has people who are strongly vested in veterans' issues. For example it was members of the Veterans Conservation Corps (Seth, Cameron and Val) that initiated the training in Spokane and the certifying officials Angela Atkinson (Shoreline), Dolores Taylor (South Seattle), Rosa Lundborg (U. of W. Bothell) that saw it in their roles to have their campuses engage in the journey toward veteran cultural competence. Kenny Kellar, Vietnam Vet and Clinical Director Respiratory Care (Pima), also saw the need to do the same on their campus.

In closing, it is an honor and privilege to be involved with great people and proactive institutions and witness the many good veteran best practices that are already in place at some institutions. For example, it was inspiring to listen to the words of the student veterans panel at the University of Washington, Bothell, where members of their newly formed Student Veteran Association spoke about their military experiences and the do's and don'ts of the classroom. I guarantee the culture of higher education will continue to change as it as long as its ear is open to the voice of the vet. ##

Ken Jacobsen, Washington State Senator & Author of Historic Veterans Conservation Corps Legislation Announces Retirement

Ken Jacobsen, the Washington State Senator representing the 46th District, encompassing most of Northern Seattle, announced his retirement May 17, 2010. On a sunny morning at *Burgermaster* at Five Corners near his alma mater, the University of Washington, State Senator Ken Jacobsen, wearing a Seattle Rainier's collectors' baseball cap, related how he came to initiate a bill in Olympia to establish the Veterans Conservation Corps (VCC). The way Ken relates the moment, the idea came out of an after-work conversation with WDVA PTSD Program Director Tom Schumacher at "The Fish", referring to a popular Olympia pub. Schumacher talked of the need for such a program and Ken went back to his office the next morning and, given that he chairs the Senate Natural Resources, Oceans, & Recreation Committee, directed his staff to write the legislation.

The Veterans Conservation Corps has proved to be not only a popular program in Washington State, it was identified as a pilot program nationally. Currently there are 44 Vet Corps members and 10 field coordinators who have provided services to "several thousand veterans and active duty military family members," according to the Veterans Corps leader, Mark Fischer. In fact, the Vet Corps is currently being tested as a prototype for a National Vet Corps as part of AmeriCorps to be launched next Fall under the Commission for National and Community Service, Washington Commission for National Service and the Washington Service Corps. Fischer observed: "Ken Jacobsen has been the inspiration and ongoing support for all these efforts over the last five years through his initial legislation and continued vigilance of state funding to the VCC."

At 65, Senator Jacobsen has a feeling for the veterans of military service. He was himself in the army as an enlisted man in artillery from 1963-1966. Like Dashiel Hammett before him, Ken contracted tuberculosis in the army and is today a member of the Disabled American Veterans. Ken grew up in North Seattle's Shoreline community, although he was born in Nebraska. His father pitched for the Wenatchee Chiefs, a minor league ball club. Ken reflected on this father's military career in the 7th Army as an infantry forward observer during World War II.

Ken attended the University of Washington after his discharge from the Army and received a BA in History. As a young man he traveled extensively, hitch-hiking through South America to Argentina and Chili. He met his wife in the Yucatan Peninsula. His wife, Rachel, is a native of New Zealand.

Always interested in politics, Ken became involved with the 46th District Democrats through volunteer work. He ran for the Washington House and served as a Representative from 1983-1996, and has been in the State Senate since 1998. At the time of this interview, Ken was recovering from a extra-long legislative session working on the State budget. He said that the usual 10-12 hour days in Olympia becoming 10-16 hour days of stressful negotiating during the final legislative push. Ken is philosophical about the outcome: "I do the best I can."

Besides his support of military veterans, Senator Jacobsen was founder of the Raoul Wallenburg Dinner at the Nordic Heritage Museum, which annually hosts speakers in the spirit of its namesake, a Swedish diplomat who was responsible to saving the lives of thousands of European Jews during the Second World War.

The Veterans' Conservation Corps, which is managed by Mark Fischer through the Washington Department of Veterans Affairs, has become a Federal trial program to develop ways to help veterans from the Wars on Terror adjust to civilian life. The program has expanded to include the counseling and training of veterans attending vocational training programs in the field of conservation and wildlife management. Many veterans in their effort to readjust to civilian life after the wars in the Middle East find that they like working in the outdoors, in natural environments, with conservation crews that understand the difficult challenges that face veterans returning from a war zone. Senator Jacobsen recalled the impact of the Second World War on his father who served with the 7th Army during the Battle of the Bulge. EE ##

RAQ Retort

The *Journal of Traumatic Stress* doesn't invite comment, but we do. If you find that you have something to add to our articles, either as retort or elaboration, you are invited to communicate via letter or Email. And if you have a workshop or a book experience to tout, rave or warn us about, the *RAQ* may play a role. Your contributions will be read by all the important people. Email the editor or WDVA.

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Long Term Effects of "Mild" Traumatic Brain Injury Examined by Seattle Researchers

Seattle researchers at the Puget Sound Health Care System conducted research using neuroimaging on 15 veterans diagnosed with mild traumatic brain injury and concluded that the veterans had incurred long term brain damage. The Seattle *Times* reported on 6/14/2010 referring to an article published in the online journal, *NeuroImage*. Elaine Peskind, together with Eric Petrie and Satoshi Minoshima, and others, co-authored the article, combining the University of Washington and VA facilities. The *Times* article, written by Hal Bernton, contrasted the groups' research results with the position of Charles Hoge, M.D., the retired Army researcher, whose book, *Once a Warrior Always a Warrior,* is reviewed on page 4 of this issue. It has been Dr. Hoge's position that mild traumatic brain injury has been overdiagnosed because of confusion with PTSD and depression. The *Times* article stated that over 150,000 cases of mild traumatic brain injury have been reported from the current Wars on Terror.

Dr. Peskind reported that since their *NeuroImage* article was published, her team has examined nine more veterans with mild traumatic brain injury using Positron Emission Tomography (PET scan) and indicated that their initial results have been confirmed. PET scan measured brain glucose consumption as a marker for brain activity. "In the scans of 12 veterans cited in the *NeuroImage* article, the researchers found four areas of the brain utilized the glucose at substantially below the rates of other study volunteers who never had served in the military. The affected areas are involved in regulating emotion, language, mental focus, sleep and other key functions."

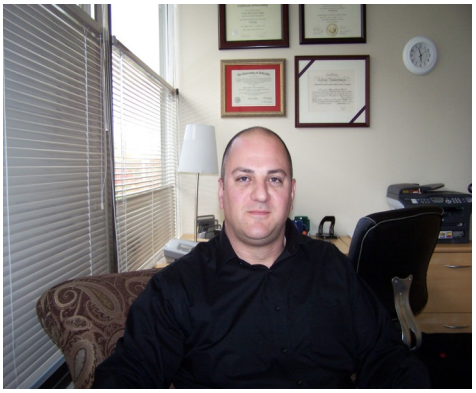
The *Times* article reported Dr. Peskind's concern that some veterans with mild TBI may develop dementia in their later years as the result of brain injuries that are similar to the recent stories about football and boxing athletes. Dr. Peskind is reported as stating that the changes found in her research subjects are "real and long-lasting." She added, "Some people have said this is all going to go away. But it hasn't gone away. My big concern is what will happen to these veterans in the future." EE ##

PTSD Psychotherapy Found to Improve Executive Function

Researchers at Kent State University reported a small but interesting study regarding the impact of PTSD psychotherapy on brain functioning. Kristen Walter, Patrick Palmieri and John Gunstad examined a sample of 15 women who completed assessments before and after engaging in psychotherapy at a PTSD clinic, The Center for the Treatment and Study of Traumatic Stress. They published their findings in the *Journal of Traumatic Stress* [More Than Symptom Reduction: Changes in Executive Function Over the Course of PTSD Treatment, 2010, 23(2), 292-295].

Walter, et al, define executive function as: "In addition to cognitive processes such as reasoning and decision-making, executive functions include the regulation of impulsive behavior and mood stability…. When executive functions are impaired, individuals may be unable to work independently, practice self-care, or maintain interpersonal relationships" (p. 292). The authors emphasized that their study had significant limitations in having a small sample size and no control group, but suggests neuropsychological performance may improve over a course of PTSD treatment, particularly on tests of executive function. EE ##

New King County PTSD Contractor, Mark Correale, Opens Office in Northgate



Mark Correale, LICSW, opened a clinical office in Seattle's Northgate neighborhood. Many King County providers know Mark as a social worker at the Seattle Puget Sound Health Care System's OIF-OEF Program, where he provides case management care coordination to service personnel getting discharged as part of the "Warrior Transition Battalion." Mark has been added as a contractor for the King County PTSD Program. His office is located at 10740 Meridian Avenue North, telephone 206-789-4868. He is willing to take referrals for the counseling of veterans and family members.

Mark grew up in Staten Island, New York, and received a BA in 1993 from New York's John J. College in Criminal Justice. After graduation he moved to Albuquerque, New Mexico, where he worked in juvenile detention and counseling the developmentally disabled. He moved to Seattle in 1997 and worked at Eastside Mental Health, now Mentor Health Northwest. He began working at the Seattle VA Puget Sound Health Care system in 1998, where he worked mainly with Vietnam War veterans. He also worked outreach with incarcerated veterans and counseling veterans with the Center's addictions program.

It is apparent that Mark brings to the King County Program a contractor with extensive experience treating veterans of the current as well as past wars. He explained that the letters after his name, LICSW, indicate that he is licensed to provide individual mental health counseling as a social worker. He received a Masters Degree in Social Work from the University of Washington in 2004. Mark will be 40 years old this year and brings 12 years of social work at the Veterans Affairs into his counseling practice. King County veterans welcome his contribution. EE ##

Book Review:

Once a Warrior Always a Warrior: Navigating the Transition from Combat to Home, by Charles W. Hoge, M.D.

Reviewed by Emmett Early

Charles Hoge is a psychiatrist who recently retired after serving 20 years in the army. He was deployed to Iraq during the second year of that war, and came to national attention when he was involved in authoring a number of medical articles that described the army's study of the military personnel deployed in the Wars on Terror. He explained the title of his book, *Once a Warrior Always a Warrior,* in his Introduction. "Society hasn't yet grasped that 'transitioning' home from combat does not mean giving up being a warrior, but rather learning to dial up or down the warrior response depending on the situation" (p. x). Dr. Hoge's book is a manual directed at veterans returning from service in war zones, as well as for the family members they come home to. He writes in a style and language that is virtually free of medical and mental health jargon. He manages to demystify the controversial topics of PTSD and mild TBI, and provides an aid to what he refers to as "navigating" (rather than coping) with the various trials in civilian life. Being career army, of course Dr. Hoge managed to recast the word "navigate", coining a regrettable piece of jargon "LANDNAV", but perhaps recently discharged veterans of the military will appreciate the acronym for "navigating the home-zone area of operations." Dr. Hoge explains that land navigation (LANDNAV) "is an essential skill that you hone, to ensure that you know where you are at all times, where you need to be and what coordinates you want rounds dropped on" (p. xxi).

Dr. Hoge's discussion of PTSD and mTBI is welcomed, especially his analysis of the confusion and blending of the two conditions. He offers "worksheets" which allow readers to assess themselves for the symptoms of disorder. The book is intended for the veterans returning from the Wars on Terror, but would be helpful to mental health professionals to read who are not familiar with military thinking and custom.

Dr. Hoge's discussion of traumatic memory is both helpful for the veteran to read and informative regarding the current research. For instance, his examination of the problem of time in traumatic recall: "On a neurological level, traumatic memories are not stored in the part of the brain dealing with fact, rational thinking, or time. Traumatic memories are stored in the limbic system so that they can be instantly retrieved, ensuring that protective reflexes take over immediately upon any reminder of the events. Not being connected to time is why a flashback can feel just as real as if the combat event had just taken place. As traumatic stories are narrated, these memories are connected with the parts of the brain having to do with time and sequence. This creates conflict because memories are never perfect representations of what actually happened. Memories are simply what our brains were capable of processing at the time of the event(s) happened, combined with what we think happened as we look back or recount the event to ourselves or others, combined with thoughts and feelings surrounding our beliefs about what happened, including what we *would like* to have happened (which may subconsciously be tied to what we think *should* have happened differently)" (pp 123-4).

The discussion of the benefit of narration in processing memories of combat was especially welcomed. "Narration helps you to live with your experiences and move forward with them as part of you" (p. 117). This may be at the root of what the title refers to, *Once a Warrior Always a Warrior,* integrating the combat memories with the functional identity of a civilian. Dr. Hoge makes a good case for relationships for veterans of any war when he states, "when a person like this [a war veteran] requests help later in life for their [sic] depression, rage, shame, despair, and other symptoms, what they need most is someone who is kind, compassionate, and who will love them…. They need someone who has the ability to tell them that they're not crazy for wanting to kill…" (p.223).

Dr. Hoge falls short in his discussion of the DVA benefits process. His "cavalier" advice is cautionary and off-putting. He seems unfamiliar with the helpful guidance that service officers can provide in aiding the veteran in navigating process of filing a claim. Dr. Hoge can also get preachy at times, particularly as he offers advice to veterans and their spouses about relationships. In all, however, *Once a Warrior Always a Warrior* is an easy helpful read for veterans, family members, and care-giving professionals. If he seems to romanticize the image of the warrior, Dr. Hoge does so in the interests of respecting the concept of the warrior. He alludes to the warrior tradition of the samurai in Japan and harkens the ideal of self-containment. "A feeling of being disrespected is your feeling, and usually doesn't warrant a response" (p. 154).

The contribution that Dr. Hoge has made to the literature of PTSD and the culture of the war veteran is significant. *Once a Warrior Always a Warrior* could be offered at processing centers, not just counseling agencies. The fact that the text may quickly become dated is a fault inherent in trying to be current with referrals and phone numbers. The references Dr. Hoge offers at the end of his book manage to address both the veteran's needs as well as more sophisticated scientific discussions. The ability to blend cutting edge science and present it in a context that includes the understanding of the war veteran and family is a gift perhaps that comes from practicing science for 20 years as an army officer. Dr. Hoge retired as a bird colonel and has left us all with the benefits of his experiences. Above all he respects the war veteran and encourages the integration of wartime experiences in the interests of becoming whole. ##

Movie Review:

Harry Brown—Korean War Veteran Returns to Warrior Status

Reviewed by Emmett Early

Michael Caine is a 77-year-old Korean War veteran who plays an aging Korean War veteran who happens to live in the very neighborhood of housing projects where Michael Caine grew up. Caine's character is Harry Brown, a man whose wife is dying of dementia. He portrays the weary bearer of sad duty as he visits his wife and tries to make conversation. He plays chess with an elderly friend at a pub. The feeling is that they have been playing together for a long time. His friend, Leonard Attwell (David Bradley), confesses that he is afraid of the young thugs who hang out in the project, called The Estate. Each scene of plot development is alternated with scenes of thug violence and intimidation. The actor Michael Caine even confessed he'd also been in a youth gang.

What develops is a vigilante plot when Harry's wife dies and his friend is murdered in gang violence. The double blow is too much for Harry and he reverts to his warrior identity. Earlier he had said to his friend "the Marines were a lifetime ago. I was a different man then." And then he adds, "Once I met my Kath, I knew that all that stuff had to be locked away." But as he seeks to buy a gun in a scene reminiscent of *Taxi Driver,* Harry gets in a shootout with the traffickers, and as he is killing one man, he tells the dying man the story of how he watched his friend die that way in Korea, and then adds piquently that he's never told anyone that story.

Harry takes away a bag of pistols from the traffickers and sets fire to their dwelling. But age and infirmity in the form of emphysema take their toll on Harry and one of the investigating police officers develops a hunch that Harry is behind the sudden increase in dead thugs.

Harry Brown was directed Daniel Barber from a story by Gary Young. The thugs are made unredeemably ugly, but carefully portrayed as Caucasians of European ethnicity. They infest the housing project like vermin, and the residents have to go around them to avoid being abused. The director took scenes also from *Clockwork Orange,* although most of the gang brutality is implied rather than shown, much of it shown at great distance.

There are also echoes of past Clint Eastwood movies, particularly his recent *Gran Torino*, about an aging Korean War veteran who decides to take on gang violence after his wife has died. The problem with *Harry Brown* is that, except for Caine's Harry, the movie is otherwise bleak and ugly. One of the police inspectors, Alice Frampton (Emily Mortimer), seems courageous but out of place amidst the brutality. The police are seen as ineffectual and unable to protect the residents of the housing project, while the police brass insist that all is under control.

Harry, in locking away his memories of Korea after meeting his wife, seems to have unlocked them when his friend is killed. Associations to grief and loss go back to his time in Korea. Charles Hoge's book, *Once a Warrior Always a Warrior*, gives a positive twist to the idea that the experiences of combat are best utilized by integrating the memories into a narrative. Harry instead, like many war veterans, tried to lock his memories away: "I was a different man then," he states. Once unlocked, however, they come forth in the body of an old man. Harry's actions put him in the hospital after he passes out chasing a thug. He doesn't stay long and leaves AMA to complete his vendetta.

There isn't much discussion in *Harry Brown* about alternative measures that might be taken to clean up The Estate. Harry appears to be isolated from other residents and has only one friend. One of the consequences of "locking away" memories of combat is that the veteran narrows his consciousness, limiting the expression of his personality. The combat memories do not become integrated to fit the context of the whole of the veteran's life. The movie gives us very little of what Harry's life was like, except that he is living on a fairly meager pension that restricts his choices for housing. He seems to have no other friends or family.

In the USA the status of the war veteran has increased considerably since 9/11. It was repeatedly noted by politicians and news reporters that the street vendor who recently alerted the police to the Times Square car bomb was a Vietnam War veteran. There was something remarkable about the veteran of one war being on the lookout for terrorists. The low-budget film *Land of Plenty* is all about a Vietnam War veteran patrolling the streets of LA looking for terrorists. All war veterans are now called heroes and thanked for their service. It was not long ago when status as a war veteran was distrusted and military service was not regarded as so noble, but rather a lower status blue collar job. With wars in progress over a period of years, a nation becomes populated with warriors turned civilians. Some might say it keeps us safe to have old warriors in our midst.

Harry Brown ends with Harry walking toward an underpass which all through the film had been populated by thugs, such that a traveler risked life and treasure to pass through. The underpass now is deserted, we assume, but for how long? Harry, for all we know, is still armed. If it is true that the urge for revenge is not quelled, but rather strengthened by acting it out, then it is only a matter of time before more thugs meet Harry Brown.

Movies and stories about war veterans reverting to vigilantism are as old as the medieval ballads about Robin Hood. They hint at hidden nobility, once manifest. In Robin's day, however, it was all about resistance to taxation that was imposed to keep a professional army in the field. When the war veteran becomes a warrior again, when the standing authority is weak and distrusted, it then becomes a question of how good the veteran's judgment is. We can see that Harry has been worn down by his wife's dementia, which implies a long draining away of their relationship. When Harry's chess partner is killed, he has no one else with whom to associate except the pub bartender. Opting to return to violence is a raw, uncivilized form of the warrior status that was kept primitive by repression. The viewer of *Harry Brown* has no choice but to root for Harry, who is volunteering for active duty once more. ##

Childhood Physical Abuse Examined in Veterans' Post-War Adjustment

There has long been an assumption among mental health professionals that prior traumas, especially traumas from childhood make one vulnerable to the traumas of adulthood. The topic was deemed worthy at Madigan Army Medical Center where April Fritch and colleagues conducted a survey of 1,045 OIF-OEF active duty, reserve and National Guard veterans attending a military outpatient behavioral health clinic. Fritch, et al, "examined the independent and interactional effects of CPA (Childhood Physical Abuse) and combat trauma on post-deployment psychiatric symptoms." They published their results in the J*ournal of Traumatic Stress* [The Impact of Childhood Abuse and Combat-Related Trauma on Postdeployment Adjustment, 2010, 23(2), 248-254]. The veterans were mostly males (85.7%) on active duty (71.5%) with a history of at least one deployment (29.3% reported two deployments and 15.9% reported three or more). The veterans were administered PTSD checklist, a combat exposure scale, and assessed for alcohol use, depression, and PTSD.

Fritch, et al, found that only higher levels of CPA and combat exposure predicted PTSD symptoms, but no interaction was found. "In effect, there was no evidence in our study sample that the effect of combat exposure on mental health functioning depended on history of CPA" (p. 252). The authors elaborated: "those with both CPA and combat exposure in the present study did not experience any more mental health difficulties than those exposed only to combat."

Fritch, et al, pointed out that their study used only a single measure of child abuse and did not separate out child sexual abuse for the study.

Comment

The independence of the variables of combat exposure and childhood physical abuse in predicting symptoms of PTSD leads Fritch and her colleagues to urge mental health practitioners to assess for both in taking a patient's history. If their results are supported by future research, it is an important finding that a history of childhood physical abuse does not make PTSD worse for those exposed to combat. However, there is a long road ahead for the combat veteran returning from deployment. Veterans with a childhood history of living in abusive households might yet fair differently in the years following their discharge. Predictably, a shaky foundation in development would reduce ones chances of limiting and resolving PTSD symptoms and might in fact result in habits that avoid rather than resolve symptoms. The same sample assessed ten years after their return from combat might show the exacerbation of symptoms in veterans reporting childhood physical abuse and combat exposure, producing an interaction that Fritch and her colleagues could not find in their initial research.

The military appears to be doing a thorough job of assessing their veterans returning from deployments, but Fritch, et al, emphasize that their sample were veterans seeking mental health treatment, which may be a significantly different group than those who do not seek treatment. EE ##

Effects of Cumulative Trauma Examined in Elderly Sample

Patrick Dulin and Teesha Passmore conducted a study to examine the effects of cumulative trauma on the mental health of elderly subjects. Specifically they examined whether the effects of cumulative trauma were predictive of anxiety and depression in a group of "community dwelling" older adults. They included in their test protocol a measure to look at the possibility that avoidance of prior traumatic material mediated the relationship between traumas and mental health. Dulin and Passmore published their results in the *Journal of Traumatic Stress* [Avoidance of Potentially Traumatic Stimuli Mediates the Relationship Between Accumulated Lifetime Trauma and Late-Life Depression and Anxiety, 2010, 23(2), 296-299].

The authors advertised for volunteer subjects and selected 1,216 participants who were over age 65. The average age was 74.2 years. The subjects were administered a Traumatic Events Questionnaire, PTSD Checklist, and measures for depression and anxiety. Subjects were instructed to indicate their age at each traumatic event.

Dulin and Passmore found that there was a predictive relationship between cumulative traumatic events and depression and anxiety. "They [the results] also suggest that the extent to which older adults avoid internal (thoughts and emotions) and external (activities or situations) aspects of prior potentially traumatic events functions as a partial mediator of these relationships [between traumas and mental health]" (p. 298). The authors indicated that their results confirm prior findings that "avoidance processes are robustly related to poor mental health outcomes" (p. 298).

Also consistent with prior research, Dulin and Passmore found that "potentially traumatic events experienced during adulthood are more predictive of late life anxiety and depression than those that occurred during childhood and adolescence,…" The authors cited the longitudinal studies of Valliant, who also concluded "that predictors of health in late life are events and functioning in adulthood and that childhood adversity (an important factor in predicting wellbeing among young adults) no longer predicts wellbeing among the elderly" (p. 298).

Comment

The study of New Zealand elderly conducted by Dulin and Passmore included in their questionnaire concerning potentially traumatic events the item "Fired a weapon or been fired upon in combat" (p. 297). They found combat experience in 7.7% of their sample. One possible implication of the study is that the impact of childhood trauma shifts from being more influential in early adulthood to taking second place behind adult traumas. The treatment of younger war veterans than should make a more thorough examination of childhood traumatic events, whereas for older war veterans, particularly the elderly over 65 lot, counseling might more efficiently focus on adult onset traumas, including combat. EE ##

Movie Review:

Yojimbo, by Akira Kurosawa—Masterless Samurai as War Veteran

Reviewed by Emmett Early

The time is 1860 in the Japanese countryside. *Yojimbo* opens with Toshiro Mifune as a wandering samurai, traveling without a destination, which is shown when he approaches a "Y" in the road and tosses a stick up into the air. He takes the road it points to on landing. The text introduces the theme. "A samurai, once a dedicated warrior in the employ of royalty now finds himself with no master to serve other than his own will to survive and no devices other than his wit and sword."

In front of the samurai an older man crosses the road chasing a younger one, scolding him. They argue in front of the samurai because the young man, the son, is leaving home to go to the town to make his living with merchants. When the samurai stops at the angry father's hut for water, he hears the man and his wife discussing the rival factions of merchants in town who have turned to violence. A humorous aspect of this scene shows the man's wife placidly weaving cloth, apparently enjoying her work, while her husband seethes with anger.

The samurai then enters the deserted town and here the inspiration of American Western films becomes obvious, for the town is deserted and the wind is blowing dust, while people peek with fearful curiosity from windows and doors. The samurai, walking warily in the wide dusty street, is startled when he sees a dog trotting along toward him carrying a severed human hand in its mouth. American film director, Sam Peckinpah featured that same scene in *The Wild Bunch* (1969) as a tribute to Kurosawa. Sergio Leone is said to have fashioned his Westerns, *Fistful of Dollars* and *The Good, the Bad, and the Ugly,* featuring the gunfighter with no name, after *Yojimbo.*

A townsperson approaches the samurai obsequiously. "Samurai, want to be a body guard? I can fix it up for you." The samurai learns from a merchant who runs a little shop selling sake and rice that the two groups of merchants are really rival gangs of outlaws led by Seibei and Ushi-Tora respectively. The proprietor (played by Eijiro Tono) relates the circumstances in the town very cleverly, by opening various window shutters in his little shop, revealing the various town characters. The proprietor angrily urges the samurai to leave instead of selling his services, but Mufuni's character replies bluntly: "Listen to me. I get paid for killing. Better if all these men are dead. Think about it." The samurai then proceeds to offer his services to each side as a bodyguard. Each gang is stocked with characters who brag about being outlaws and seem to take killing as a matter of routine. When the two factions are stirred into action by vying for the samurai, he opts out and watches from the town bell tower as the gangs comically confront each other.

Yojimbo establishes the theme that Kurosawa developed early in his career, depicting the samurai warrior as a man who does not belong to the community, which in this case is fraught with bad characters on both sides. The merchants and their henchmen are corrupt and their destructive end seems deserved. That Kurosawa struck a chord with the public is indicated by *Yojimbo*'s unprecedented popularity in Japan and its continued international acclaim.

As in *Seven Samurai*, the samurai has no strong interest in profit and only manages to eek a little gain from the conflict, and in the end must move on, because he doesn't belong. He takes a vicious beating, is imprisoned by one gang, risks his life in combat with multiple adversaries, killing most, sparing some, showing extraordinary skills. After he escapes his imprisonment, half dead, the sake shop proprietor and the coffin maker manage to smuggle the samurai out of town hidden in a coffin. He recovers over time, sheltered in a shrine, and finally returns in full strength to finish off the two gangs. When he kills the last villain, a cocky, pistol-toting bandit (Ikio Sawamura), the unrepentant dying man croaks, "Samurai trash. I'll be waiting in hell for you."

What Kurosawa has captured in his samurai films and what the American Western has so frequently captured is the alienation of the war veteran attempting to survive after the war. Ted Kotcheff famously portrayed Sylvester Stallone as Rambo in *First Blood* (1982) walking down a country road dressed in an army fatigue jacket, carrying only a sleeping bag, quickly and unjustly harassed by the town's lawman. Archetypes are formed through the ages as warriors return home after the war and repeat the experience. The inviting opportunity in film story-telling is the social commentary of society viewed from the isolation of a man who is living where he doesn't feel he belongs.

The symbol of the masterless warrior who does not belong to the community captures the feeling of estrangement in the modern war veteran that may or may not be a symptom of PTSD. It has to do with habitual ways of thinking and behaving: the veteran's frame of reference being occupied by memories of combat conditions. All of which constitutes a difference between the veteran and his home community that was not present before deployment to the combat zone. This complex mix of estrangement and feelings of strong potential are subsumed in the romance of the masterless samurai.

John Pierre Melville, who was himself involved in combat in the French Resistance of WWII (see his *Army of Shadows*), directed the 1967 noir film, *Le Samurai*. He wanted to give his nameless hit man a schizoid personality (Melville called him schizophrenic) that was unresponsive to most relationships and who killed without feeling—wearing white gloves. Melville's hit man mimics the masterless samurai. The combat veteran is not necessarily schizoid, but while he or she may relate competently and functionally in the community, may yet feel estranged, impatient, annoyed, and more or less vaguely in peril, as if the veteran were unconsciously expecting something dangerous to happen. E.B. Sledge, a war veteran of Pacific island battles, who returned to a welcoming family and went on to college and an academic career, yet felt this estrangement.

The compatibility of the samurai of Japanese culture with the American West of the 19th Century makes the Westerns of John Ford, Sam Peckinpah, Clint Eastwood, and others, attuned across

(Continued on page 10, see *Yojimbo.)*

***(Yojimbo,* Continued from page 9.)**

cultures with Kurosawa, Melville, and Sergio Leone.

Lately, film director Clint Eastwood has adapted the theme of the estranged war veteran to modern times with his 1997 *Absolute Power* and his 2008 *Gran Torino*, both films about Korean War combat veterans who remained maladapted and estranged into old age after suffering the loss of their spouses. Victor Nuñez's 1997 *Ulee's Gold* also captures this theme; again, the aging veteran's isolation after the loss of his spouse.

The anonymity of the samurai represents the duality of the war veteran whose strong memories are of a combatant who is now hidden and more or less secret. This sense of dual identity can be integrated by a number of creative techniques, not least of which is the commitment to a relationship with a person of trust. Or it may be revealed in creative works. Early post-war estrangement may also be made worse by maladaptive personality style and the formation of maladaptive habits of coping that perpetuate the feelings. The veteran may find more solace in a subculture, such as law enforcement, physically demanding work, or outlaw club membership, where the warrior's estrangement is understood and even honored, and where relationships may be formed in a particular environment that itself never integrates fully into the dominate culture.

The theme of the war veteran as masterless samurai is exploited for many action films. War veterans are hired for criminal capers and for the protection of citizens in John Frankenheimer's 1997 film, *Ronin,* which is pure action, exploiting the idea of ex-soldiers who are for hire. Frankenheimer's *Ronin* begins with a pretentious reference to the samurai of medieval Japan, where "the warrior class of samurai were sworn to protect their liege lords with their lives. Those samurai whose liege was killed suffered a great shame, and they were forced to wander the land, looking for work as hired swords or bandits. These masterless warriors were no longer referred to as samurai. They were known by another name: such men were called Ronin." The remainder of the film, which seems more inspired by auto racing, makes no further reference to the Japanese tradition.

John Sturges' 1960 *Magnificent Seven*, is an undisguised imitation of Kurosawa's *Seven Samurai*, exploiting the romantic formula of action and nostalgia that worked so well in Japan. Years later, near the end of his life, shortly after his 1990 *Dreams* was released, Kurosawa made a trip to the U.S. to accept an award. The film he wanted to see first when he arrived was Martin Scorsese's *Taxi Driver*, which depicted the urban plight of a discharged war veteran. In *Dreams* Kurosawa has a short film, *The Tunnel,* devoted to a Japanese army officer returning home after his incarceration as a prisoner of war. He had sacrificed his company in battle and been captured. Kurosawa's war veteran is followed through the tunnel by the ghosts of his dead soldiers. Kurosawa was never in the military. He was an art student and apprentice director during the war. His post-war *Stray Dog* portrays a young policeman (Tushiro Mifuni), who has had his pistol stolen, wandering through the crowded streets of Tokyo disguised as a war veteran in search of his lost weapon. The disguise he chose was apparently a common sight on the streets of the city. ##

World War II Veteran-Author J. D. Salinger's Death Ends His Avoidance of Fame

Author J.D. Salinger achieved international success with his first novel, *Catcher in the Rye*. He followed up with collections of stories, among them *Nine Stories*, published in 1953. Salinger was drafted into the U.S. Army and served from 1942 to 1945. He was a member of an army intelligence team that landed on Utah Beach during the Normandy Invasion of 1944. His job was interrogating prisoners. He was involved in fierce fighting that winter during the Battle of the Bulge. His outfit suffered heavy loses. His short story, "For Esmé—With Love and Squalor," describes a veteran, who six years later gets a wedding invitation from a girl and makes notes about meeting her in England before D-Day. He writes that he was part of a 60 man intelligence unit receiving special training.

The narrator, addressing the reader in the first person, describes himself as a soldier walking into town and stopping at a church because he heard children singing. He entered the church and made note of one adolescent girl standing near him and singing better than the others. He leaves the church and goes to a teahouse and then meets the girl again, this time she is with her little brother and her aunt. She introduces herself as Esmé. She and her brother are orphans: her father died in the war and her mother just died. Esmé is precocious, pretentious, and endearing. She ends their conversation with the invitation to exchange letters. She also asks him to write a story for her and encourages him to include squalor, because she loved stories with squalor.

The second part of the story takes place in a barracks after the war had ended. The narrator describes a Staff Sergeant X, in conversation with a buddy who visits him. They have ridden a jeep together through the course of the European fighting. Sgt. X has had a "nervous breakdown." The narrator takes a point of view that fittingly describes dissociation: "I'm still around, but from here on in, for reasons I'm not at liberty to disclose, I've disguised myself so cunningly that even the cleverest reader will fail to recognize me." Sgt. X has "the shakes" and a nervous tic. He has difficultly concentrating when it comes to reading and writing. His buddy who visits has a European Theater campaign ribbon with five bronze stars for as many battle engagements, indicating that they had been in regular combat. His visitor informs Sgt. X that his girlfriend wrote him that people didn't have nervous breakdowns just from combat. That he must have had other mental problems. "She says you were probably unstable like your whole goddamn life."

Sgt. X is unable to correspond with Esmé, whose letter has found him through a succession of APO addresses. He has lost his identity and with it the ability to communicate with the innocent girl.

The veteran telling the story has recovered, at least somewhat, for he has married and seems to be functioning well. Salinger's war record is sketchy. He became a recluse at the height of his literary fame. He stopped publishing and declined almost all interviews, but there are sufficient parallels and detail in "For Esmé" that the story might very well be autobiographical.

The veteran who was traumatized on the job interrogating prisoners to gather information avoids being interviewed at the peak of his career. Is that a symptom or a personality quirk? EE
##

Movie Review:

Vincere—Pompous World War I Veteran Rises to Power as a Fascist

Reviewed by Emmett Early

Included in a catalog of war veteran films is the Italian *Vincere*, which was directed by Marco Bellocchio. It is the story of a woman who is betrayed by her lover, and relevant to this discussion because the lover was First World War veteran Benito Mussolini. The story describes the love affair between Ida Dalser, played with great passion by Giovanna Mezzogiorno, and young Socialist-activist Benito Mussolini (Filippo Timi). She supports him, has a child by him, sells all she owns to support his cause of creating a Socialist newspaper, until he goes off to fight in the First World War, where he is wounded and hospitalized. When he returns, he reveals his allegiance to his first wife and child and denies his relationship with Ida. As he rises to power, she persists on claiming to be his wife and that her child, young Benito, is his son. Finally she is brutally abused and committed to a mental institution.

Vincere, a title that translates as *Victory,* recreates the mood of the period by using documentary film footage, both as an influence on the viewers at the time, and edited into the film to influence the contemporary audience of *Vincere.* At the same time another WWI veteran was rising to power, using similar fascistic rhetoric in Germany that fighting in combat is noble and glorious.

After the war veteran Benito Mussolini rejects Ida, he continues his campaign to become a political leader and eventually is symbolically frozen in form as a pompous plaster bust of himself. Ida, abused and incarcerated in a mental institution persists in her claim, which is interpreted by the doctors and nurses as delusional thinking. Her son is taken from her as a boy and eventually also is incarcerated as insane. A psychiatrist tries to reason with her, to get her to say the things that will allow her release, even if she does not believe what she says. She stands in stark contrast to Benito, who in his speeches, like a sycophant to the collective stoking a populist cause, speaks in slogans that please the crowds and excites desire for war. Ida sticks to what she believes is true and is locked away and ignored.

As a wounded war veteran, Benito Mussolini gained legitimacy and respect. He was an activist for socialist causes before the war, but emerged from combat and hospitalization as a fascist. His training as an activist in the streets was easily transferred from one cause to another. He read the politics of the time and rode a popular theme. Like Hitler in Germany, he discovered the key that unlocked the power of collective passion with the intoxicating rhetoric of power and racial-ethnic superiority, while Ida in her madness speaks the truth.

Documentary film from the early 20th Century is put to extraordinary use by Bellocchio. The audiences seem mesmerized by the grainy black-and-white scenes. In one fascinating scene in which Mussolini is hospitalized after being wounded in the war, dramatized depictions of Christ's crucifixion are projected on the vaulted ceiling, like moving murals on a medieval cathedral.

The pomposity of Benito Mussolini grows with his fame. He is introduced at a Socialist meeting and before beginning his speech states melodramatically that he will pause five minutes and challenge God, if he exists, to strike him dead. He stands before the tense audience and waits, as if his continuing to live is proof that God is a fiction. Mussolini learned to use high drama on a public stage to develop an exaggerated operatic persona designed to stimulate audiences. Throughout *Vincere* the Italian crowds gather and sing operatic themes substituting political chants.

Ida also takes her appeals to a melodramatic extreme, climbing the iron grating over high windows to plead her cause, attempting to toss messages and letters outside. In the meantime attendant nuns busily picked the notes off the ground. The Catholic nuns who are her nurses and ward attendants are depicted as dutiful. They tie Ida and other patients to their beds when they become disruptive. The scenes of the abusive restraint are frightening. As someone who has made a career out of mental health work and spent time working on locked hospital wards, I can recall the nagging fear that one harbors that the poor patient might not be delusional, but telling the truth.

Viewing *Vincere* after just discussing politics with a friend, I had a spooky thought about how a character like Mussolini or Hitler might appear today. We are sometimes told in the news media that a politician speaking on a national stage is really playing to the domestic audience. When a politician rouses the crowd to cheers and collective action with popular slogans the potential is frightening—especially when one considers the old axiom in statistics that the IQ of any collective body regresses to the mean.

The fate of Ida's son, young Benito is a sad one. Rejected by his father, he seems to be socially awkward and appears to do one thing well, and that is to imitate and mimic his father's speeches. His classmates goad him to perform and he works himself up by puffing and shouting the slogans that seem, coming from him, the words of a madman. He is finally incarcerated and commits suicide.

An odd quirky sidelight: I was reminded of a line from jazz trumpeter Chet Baker, who, when he was performing in Italy, teamed up with jazz pianist Romano Mussolini, a son of Benito Mussolini. Baker, noted for his cool, said: "Gee, it's a drag about your old man." ##

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The PTSD Program is committed to outreach of returning veterans of our current wars. We work closely with the National Guard, military reserves, and active duty members and families to promote a healthy and supportive homecoming.

To be considered for service by a WDVA or King County Contractor, a veteran or veteran's family member must present a copy of the veteran's discharge form DD-214 that will be kept in the contractor's file as part of the case documentation. Occasionally, other documentation may be used to prove the veteran's military service. You are encouraged to call Tom Schumacher for additional information, or if eligibility is considered a potential issue.

It is always preferred that the referring person or agency telephone ahead to discuss the client's appropriateness and the availability of time on the counselor's calendar. Some of the program contractors conduct both group and individual/family counseling. ##

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